



Testimony of Eric Gjede
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Before the Labor & Public Employees Committee
Hartford, CT
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**Testifying in opposition to
HB 6380: AN ACT CONCERNING THE DISCLOSURE OF SALARY RANGE FOR A VACANT POSITION**

Good afternoon Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, Senator Sampson, Representative Arora and members of the Labor & Public Employees Committee. My name is Eric Gjede and I am the vice president of government affairs for CBIA, the Connecticut Business & Industry Association. CBIA is Connecticut's largest business organization, with thousands of member companies, small and large, representing a diverse range of industries from across the state. Ninety-five percent of our member companies are small businesses with less than 100 employees.

CBIA opposes section 2 of HB 6380.

CBIA supports wage equality and we believe that Connecticut citizens deserve equal pay for equal work. Employers typically set salary levels based on their internal needs and external market forces and apply those principles consistently and without bias.

HB 5383 appears to require employers to provide equal pay to employees in the workplace who perform "comparable" duties regardless of skill or productivity. This is a departure from the current law that requires employers to pay "equal pay for equal work." Although the change seems innocuous, we believe it would have a negative impact on both employers and employees:

1. Moving from "equal work" to "comparable work" blunts the internal and external market forces that naturally shape the value of a given job and the compensation that job demands.
2. Requiring employers to pay employees equal pay for comparable work undermines the merit pay system. This bill appears to dilute—if not prevent—an employer from paying more to employees that are exceptionally skilled, or who demonstrate more effort than others. Under this approach, businesses, particularly small businesses, would have difficulty retaining their top talent from being recruited by larger competitors. This is already a factor often cited by small Connecticut manufacturers.

Connecticut's workforce is often rated highly in national surveys, and our key advantage is our productivity. This bill appears to undermine the importance of performance and productivity at the very time we need to grow high value jobs and support employers that have unbiased compensation systems that reward merit and consistently provide equal pay for equal work for all.

For these reasons, we urge the committee to strike section 2 of HB 6380.